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The Undying Splendour

J. W. STREETS
Late Sergt. 13th Batt. York. and Lanc. Regiment

London, W.C.:
Erskine Macdonald, Ltd.

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THE UNDYING SPLENDOUR.

The War Time Poems of
Sergt. John William Streets,
13th Batt. York & Lancaster Regiment.
"Wounded and Missing," July 1, 1916,
Officially notified "Killed," May 1, 1917.

Erskine Macdonald, Ltd.

The Undying Splendour

By

J. W. STREETS
(Sergt. 13th Batt. York. & Lanc. Regt.)

LONDON, W.C.:
ERSKINE MACDONALD, LTD.

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First Published, May, 1917.

Harrison, Fehring & Co., Ltd., Printers, 11-15, Emerald Street, W.C.1.

PREFACE.

Here the soul of young England is revealed. Here we see the wakening to duty and the Vision Splendid which led noble spirits by a horrible road to the redemption of a world grown grey with doubt and timidity and evils too grievous to be longer borne. Here is an epitome of the stern, resolute temper with which the crisis was met and the inevitable questionings faced. Here the Kitchener's men become articulate, and in passionate sincerity a son of the people, with that perfected utterance and intensity of emotion which distinguishes poetry above all literature and redeems from decay the speech of the Divine in man to men, concentrates in a few sonnets the feelings, experiences, aspirations of the youth who have marched through death to the moral and material salvation of Europe. Here is one of the finest of the countless examples of the heroic in literature provided by the war—literature translated into action, action infused with calm seriousness and interpreted into poetry.

Sergt. Streets sought before the war to give literary expression to the life he knew. A long poem dealing with coal mining, the work in

which he was engaged when the war called him from the pit, impressed Mr. Herbert Trench when he was acting as adjudicator of the POETRY REVIEW *premium poems five years ago. This realism—no pseudo-stuff, artificially sought out for literary purposes—was developed by the war, and the sonnets that came, first from training camp and afterwards from the trenches, written in pencil on scraps of paper stained with mud and sent off unpolished lest the death that lurked by day and night all round should suddenly strike and, as eventually did happen, destroy the poems with the poet, developed a rare spirituality and an unequalled intensity of expression. The last of them to reach the present writer were passed on to Mr. H. B. Irving, who was making a choice from various suggestions and personal preferences of what to read at a meeting of the Poetry Society, following an address by Sir Herbert Warren on "The Appeal of Poetry to our Day," and Mr. Irving chose the trench poems, and profoundly impressed the audience, who were thrilled by their dignity, beauty, and application to the occasion. These sonnets were accompanied by an illuminating letter, in which Streets explained:*

"They were inspired while I was in the trenches, where I have been so busy I have had little time to polish them. I have tried to picture some thoughts that pass through a man's brain when he dies. I may not see the end of

the poems, but hope to live to do so. We soldiers have our views of life to express, though the boom of death is in our ears. We try to convey something of what we feel in this great conflict to those who think of us, and sometimes, alas! mourn our loss. We desire to let them know that in the midst of our keenest sadness for the joy of life we leave behind, we go to meet death grim-lipped, clear-eyed, and resolute-hearted."

In these words the author affords a sufficient introduction to this collection—a justification of his poems and of the noble purpose with which he exercised his gift of expression. Of him as a soldier his Commanding Officer and Company Officer have volunteered to write on hearing that this volume was in preparation, and their tributes form an appropriate part of this brief introduction.

GALLOWAY KYLE.

The Poetry Review,
London, W.C. 1.

II.

Furness Hospital for Officers,
Harrogate,
7th April, 1917.

Dear Sirs,

I understand you are publishing a book of the verses of Sergt. J. W. Streets.

If his verses are as good as his reputation as a soldier, you may rest assured that the book will be a great success.

Streets was a member of my Company since the commencement of the War, and his reputation as a thoroughly reliable N.C.O., gained in England and in Egypt, was enhanced when we were transferred to France.

He was conspicuous amongst a battalion of brave men who formed the left wing battalion of the great Allied advance on the 1st *July. He fell along with the remainder of his comrades, and died as he had lived—a MAN.*

Need I say more?

It was a privilege to command such men.

Yours faithfully,

A. PLACKETT,
Major.

III.

It is given to few men to win the confidence of their comrades as completely as did Sergt. Streets. In training, in Egypt, and in the trenches on the Somme he was always to be counted on both by his officers and the men under him. His fellow N.C.O.'s would be the first to endorse this opinion. Steady-eyed and rather stolid, he gave an impression of coolness even under extreme tension. The only time we ever saw him shaken was when he lost several of his section, with whom he had lived and trained for over eighteen months. Yet he was not of those who ignore danger; rather, he faced it and found the cause more than sufficient compensation.

At the time of writing, little hope remains of Sergt. Streets having survived July 1st. When he was reported missing, few of us who knew him had much hope of seeing him again. We knew that Streets was not the man easily to surrender. Perhaps he could have no better or more fitting epitaph.

R. E. J. MOORE,
Company Officer,
Capt. 13th York and Lancasters.

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The Undying Splendour

I. ENGLAND.

There lies an isle, a splendour of the sea
Haunting as Babylon, illustrious as Rome :
A race of Saxon freemen there have home
In England fair, the shrine of liberty.
The blue sea loves to lap its shingly shores;
Murmuring in caves its own immortal story,
Whilst Beauty haunts its woodlands, dells, and
moors,
And on its plains rich harvests wave their glory.
Unto its shores, like swallows to the south,
Are lured the mercantile of every clime ;
There Commerce pours in every harbour mouth
Its untold Wealth in Labour maritime—
And on its seas with Freedom's flag unfurl'd
Its navy sweeps—a wonder of the world.

II. TRADITION.

Like olden Rome, like Carthage ancient queen—
World-conquering, the pride of seven seas—
Thou, England, stood amidst thy victories
And gazed upon thy laurels cedar-green—
The gift that like Prometheus thou did give
Humanity—won from Fate and Life ;
A heritage whose evergreen will live
Whilst Liberty undaunted fronts the strife :
Flushed with thy conquest proudly thou didst lay—
Thy battle-panoply rusting by thy side—
Scar'd, gladden'd, like some knight of olden day
Gazing upon his prize—a conquer'd bride :
While in thy cloisters bards their harp-chords strung
And thy high greatness proudly, grandly, sung.

III. THE GENIUS.

Lucid, within the night he saw a star :
Lighting the darkness of his soul, supreme,
Piercing its shadows deep it came. There, far,
His waking soul beheld a flashing dream.
Out of his idle youth, his lethargy
He woke, his being burning with desire,
And sought like one through scorn and infamy
To win for men an elevating fire.
In solitude he wrought, fashion'd his dream :
White from the fires of life its chaos drew,
And by his gift promethean (supreme)
He forged a form that into Beauty grew :
He gave his work to men ; engraved his name,
This English youth, upon the scroll of Fame.

IV. THE LOVERS.

When Twilight veil'd with blue the sunset gold
And cast o'er Earth its web of mystery,
Two lovers lost in Life's infinity
Their love to each in deathless kisses told.
The brook did babble its eternal song;
The thrush did lilt the ecstasy of Life;
The stars, like flocks, the fields of heaven did
throng,
While incense rose from perfumed flowers arife.
Ardent and long they stood in sweet embrace,
Stood dreaming of the years that Love would
bring;
They read the love-light in each burning face,
And swift as light a dream in each did spring—
A dream that blossom'd like the orchard tree
And found its fruit in sweet maternity.

V. THE WORKMAN.

Adventure Youth will have. Behold the days
When o'er the seas discoverers roamed to gain
The gleam, the treasure of an unknown main.
When Romeos went singing amorous lays
Unto the Juliets of their errantry,
And even now they dance at Carnival;
Gamble for wealth, watching the dice and ball;
Or seek for Chance amid Life's pageantry.
But he, the workman, his adventure found—
Beat up the surges of his blood—in this:
He toiled for wife and children; from Life ground
Their sustenance just for a look, a kiss.
He toiled for love; his wealth of youth did spend
For love and birth, adventure without end.

VI. THE PORTENT.

From Scotland down to Devon England lay
Immune from war ; her poets of peace did sing.
The labourer sow'd the harvest in the spring
That reapers gather'd in an autumn day :
The cities flourished, richer grew the trades,
E'en Learning proudly leapt into the van ;
Man gendered social dreams for weaker man ;
While lovers woo'd and wedded beauteous
maids :
Upon the seas her navy watch did keep
O'er dreams of Commerce, purposes of men—
Sudden across the heavens there did sweep,
Reaching the crowded city, scattered glen,
A flaming meteor that the watchers saw,
Signal of bloody strife, presage of war.

VII. BELGIUM.

Across the fields of peaceful Belgium came
Those lawless hosts, rampant, flamed with lust ;
They piled with ruin, burned with wanton
flame
Its homes and monuments—razed to the dust
The sculptured beauty that the centuries fled
Bequeath'd had to the world ; wrought
Calumny ;
Ravished and bared to vestal sanctity,
Treading beneath their feet its hallow'd dead.
But like some god awaken'd from his dreams,
Latent with power, small, yet of Titan worth,
Belgium arose ; she, mid the flames of Rheims,
Dying, was of a giant soul giv'n birth,
And then to aid this people, heroes, great,
England arose and fled her eastern gate.

VIII. THE CALL.

Like solo flute above an orchestra
Freedom was heard calling her brave sons
To save a nation ravish'd by the Huns,
Wrest Belgium from a power sinistra.
Was England heedless of the trumpet call ?
Did her best Youth linger for her to die ?
No ! from her cities, hamlets, towns, they all
Rushed to the ensign waving in the sky.
The genius left his visions, dreams of fame ;
The workman fled his offspring and his wife ;
And lion Youth fearless and rampant came
To follow Freedom's flag into the strife.
Old England saw proud Youth allegiance take—
Men with the souls of Wellington and Drake.

IX. YOUTH'S CONSECRATION.

Lovers of Life ! Dreamers with lifted eyes !
O Liberty, at thy command we challenge
Death !
The monuments that show our fathers' faith
Shall be the altars of our sacrifice.
Dauntless, we fling our lives into the van,
Laughing at Death because within Youth's
breast
Flame lambent fires of Freedom. Man for man
We yield to thee our heritage, our best.
Life's highest product, Youth, exults in life ;
We are Olympian Gods in consciousness ;
Mortality to us is sweet ; yet less
We value Ease when Honour sounds the strife.
Lovers of Life, we pledge thee Liberty
And go to death, calmly, triumphantly.

X. THE SACRIFICE.

O Thou who honour'd Earth so long ago,
O Kingly Christ, the holy Son of God,
Who bore in raven shades the nations' woe
And thro' Thy love the path of Calvary trod!
Thou who didst teach all men to succour need,
Didst vision give to dim and dreamless eyes,
Who crownèd Love, Thou who dethronèd Greed,
And led the way to Life—to Sacrifice—
O Thou who pleaded ever 'mid disdain
That when for weaker comrades we did give
Our own sweet lives, alone then we did live—
Know Thou, O Christ, Thou didst not live in vain—
For Youth hath found in Love vitality,
And treads with Thee the way to Calvary.

XI. MOURNING.

How aspen whisperings by the meadow stream ;
Long agonies of night-winds in the forest pines ;
Wail of some love-bird who has lost his dream ;
Sad dirge of Autumn in the wood confines—
These have a voice, a solemn requiem,
Filling the deepest chambers of my soul
With music sad whose swelling theme doth roll
Into despair, crown'd with Grief's diadem.
But from that land whose memories ne'er pale,
To me there came a poignant agony—
A sob of bitter grief, a broken wail,
Drawn from the depths of Love, Maternity :
The song of Rachel weeping for her dead ;
Love mourning for its heaven too soon fled.

XII. THEIR IMMORTALITY.

Who says that ye are dead, ye Albion sons,
Youth strong in flesh, Olympian in brain,
Who sleep there in France where boom'd the guns,
Near Ypres, Loos, or by the silvery Aisne?
Who says for you the splendid day is o'er,
That your high purpose merges from the light?
Who will deny that on, for evermore,
Your star will flash, a splendour in the night?
While Mons doth hold her crown of Fortitude;
While Memory holds the bravery of the Aisne;
While from Gallipoli, that headland rude,
There rise the ghosts of the unconquer'd slain;
So from the tombs of Freedom ye will rise,
Like some old yew whose glory never dies.

XIII. LAST VISION.

The day for you is done : yet o'er the verge,
Beyond the brim where your swift sun has set,
Where Day and Night in one grand bridal merge,
I see a star amid the shadows set.
It is the star that will be seen at morn
Amid the splendour of the eastern sky,
Just when the lark, his breast with passion torn,
Doth fling his soul into an ecstasy.
Shine on, thou star, born in the world's dark night,
Lit from the eyes of dying Youth—who fell
Amid their love, their dreams, Life's rare delight—
Keeping with thee thy lonely sentinel :
Shine on, thou star of Freedom, 'til is born
Within the womb of Night thy fadeless morn !

Hymn to Life: Hurdcott Camp.

I hear thy voice in the lonely pines
When the winds arise in their unknown lair ;
In the rush of waves in the caves' confines ;
In the skylark's song o'er the moorlands bare.
My eyes behold thy majesty
In the stars that tangle the web of night
With the woof and warp of mystery ;
In the dawn that trembles into light
O'er the hills ; in the bridal of the spring ;
In the flash of wild brooks murmuring.

Hushed is the night with thy serenity ;
Calm : not a zephyr stirs the pine-tree-tops :
I stand unbared beneath thy sanctity
Alone with thee and dreams in some fir copse,
Thy spirit stirring, wakening my sense
With some divine, blest consciousness intense.
Or in some wild and silent solitude,
Remote, afar, with desolation bare,
With thee I dwell in thy existence rude,
Finding in solitude a passion rare.

Thou wert, thou art, thou shalt be—mystery !
Sprung in the nebulae of myriad stars ;
Thou art the soul of all humanity,
Of men who are thy own true avatars.
Thou art the spirit that dost ever weave
A cosmos from the chaos vast and deep ;
A power that eternally dost heave
A consciousness from out a lifeless sleep.
Thou art desire ; the birth, the end of race ;
The soul of love, of hate, of peace and strife ;
The mystery we fear, yet search its face ;
Thou wert, thou art, thou shalt be—Life !

Through thee man tastes all joy, he burdens pain,
Sorrow thou art (tho' ecstasy yet grief) ;
Pregnant thou art with passion strong and vain,
With vast eternities, illusions brief.
How 'round thee wild imagination plays,
Finding in thee its Litany, its Jove,
Losing itself in thy intricate maze,
A wanderer doom'd ever in thee to rove !
Thou art the exultation of the morn ;
The myst'ry of the starless lone twilight ;
The wonder in the heart of Childhood born ;
The wild despair found in the heart of night.

Wing'd like the dawn I saw thee arise,
Thy wild wings fanning my heart to fire ;
Magic burst on my wondering eyes,
My soul fled down the ways of desire.
Then shadows fell from thy beating wings,
Throwing night o'er the orient flame ;
I knew the burden of deeper things
That from the heart of thy sadness came.
I have drunk with thee thy rosy wine
Intoxicating with delight ;
I have knelt with thee at some far shrine,
Alone in the bitterness of night.
I have struck thy harp till its ecstasies
Burst in madness musical ;
My fingers have touched the minor keys
That like a dirge on my heart did fall.

Thou hast crushed me in thy titan arms ;
Hast shadow'd my youth, destroyed its hope ;
Divested love of its earliest charms,
And left me faithless in night to grope.
Like the laugh of doom I have heard thy laugh
At my grief and disillusionment ;
Thou hast given me little wine to quaff
Till drunk with wild despair I went.
Thou hast scorn'd me, thwarted my desires ;

Played with my soul as a worthless pawn ;
Heated me in the furnace fires
And on thy anvil welt me in scorn.
Hast denied me love, hast denied me hope,
And left me alone in the night to grope.

By thee denied, yet am I not of thee ?
Of bliss deprived, thy urge is in my blood.
That urge shall lead me on to mastery ;
I shall aspire, I shall attain my good.
With thee I've fought, with thee I've wrestled
long ;
My purpose is as silent, sure as light ;
I still will strive with thee, O spirit strong :
Thou canst not crush me, hide me in thy night.

The wind is in the pines, night on the hill ;
Thou callest me, my spirit answers still ;
Thou callest me from out Youth's paradise
To make for thee the final sacrifice.
I am not daunted by the mystery
Of that beyond to which thou bidst me go ;
I calmly mount the hill of Calvary
With songs of life, with footsteps sure, tho'
slow.

Perhaps when at thy touch sets my lone sun,
Perhaps amid the closing of my dreams
I may behold Love (with its web unspun)
Shining on me with its eternal beams.

I know that in that hour I shall undaunted
stand
With purpose in my eyes, sword in my hand;
I know that when I sink beneath the strife
I there shall dream of Love, exult in Life.

November, 1915.

Sonnets of Twilight & Youth.

I. VISION.

Charmed with the ceaseless music of the brook—
Babbling with hope and with Youth's deathless
song ;
Full with the joys of lovers who, sans book,
Have found that happiness is just to long
For some sweet face, some voice, some footstep
known,
But, better still, to feel some ardent press
Of lips that are with peerless passion blown,
Mad for the magic of a deathless kiss—

Charmed with the sound and what it bears to me
From out the distance of the unborn years
I weep—O pinewood shadows chilling me
With shadow-haunted grief, presage of tears !
Must Youth, whose orient wings are lightning-
plumed,
Be crowned with grief, to sure death be
doomed ?

II. SHADOW.

O why should Youth, whose symbol is the lark
That mounts with new-born dreams unto the
    sky,
Be doomed at frequent intervals to lie
Voiceless and dreamless, prostrate in the dark ?
Why, 'mid the laughter of the carnival,
The feast of roses sensuous with delight,
Why should there break the terror of a call—
Death calling Youth into the unknown night ?

For thus at morn the twilight-footed Death
Sweeps from the zenith to the orient rim
Where Youth doth play ; and soon his phantom
    wreath
Fadeth like beauty into distance dim :
Fadeth like yon rich sunset in the sky
That seems O sad and tenderly to die !

III. CHALLENGE.

Go tell yon shadows stalking 'neath the trees
With silent-footed terror, go tell Death
He cannot with Life's vast uncertainties
Affright the heart of Youth! for Youth cometh
With flush of impulse, passion to defeat,
Undaunted purpose, vision clear descried,
To counteract, lay at Death's unseen feet
The gauntlet of defiance. Far and wide,
Beyond the fear of that unknown exile,
That brim of Time, that web of darkness drawn
Across Life's orient sky, there breaks a smile
Of light that swells into the hope of dawn:
A dream within the dark, like evening cool,
Like sunset mirror'd in yon darken'd pool.

IV. TRIUMPH.

Thus dreaming in the shadows of the pines,
Feeling the presage of the unborn years,
I know that Youth will brave the dark confines
And wrest from Death his diadem of years.
I know that should I still and prostrate lie
Amid Death's harvest there on Belgium's plain,
No false regret shall scorning wander by
And taunt me that my Youth hath been in vain.
Rather in my last moments will I live
My life's past purpose rich in destiny,
Its scorn of Ease, its eagerness to give
Challenge to all, blind to eternity.
Death will not, cannot wrest from out my mind
The thought that Love its life in death can find.

Sergt. J. W. Streets, 13th Batt. York. & Lanc. Regt.

At Dawn in France.

Night on the plains, and the stars unfold
The cycle of night in splendour old ;
The winds are hushed, on the fire-swept hill
All is silent, shadowy, still—
Silent, yet tense as a harp high-strung
By a master hand for deeds unsung.
Slowly across the shadowy night
Tremble the shimmering wings of light,
And men with vigil in their eyes
And a fever light that never dies—
Men from the city, hamlet, town,
Once white faces tanned to brown,—
Stand to the watch of the parapet
And watch, with rifles, bayonets set,
For the great unknown that comes to men
Swift as the light : sudden, then——

Dawn ! the light from its shimmering wings
Lights up their faces with strange, strange
things :
Strange thoughts of love, of death and life,
Serenity 'mid sanguine strife :——

Dreams of life where the feet of youth
Rush to the pinnacles of Truth ;
Where early dreams with pinions fleet
Rush to find a love complete ;
Of Love and Youth 'neath rosy bowers
Sensuous, mad with the wine-filled hours,
Flushed with hope and joy's delight,
Weaving rapture from the night :——
Visions of death where the harp is still
And the sun sets swiftly behind youth's hill ;
Where the song is hushed and the light is dead
And the man lies with the remembered ;
Where Memory weaves a paradise,
A mother's face, her tender eyes,
Her suffering for the child she gave,
Her love unbroken by the grave ;
Where shadows gather o'er the bliss,
The rapture of a bridal kiss :——
Yet dreams where Youth (sublimity !)
Doth thrill to give for Liberty
Its love, its hope, its radiant morn,
Doth thrill to die for the yet unborn,
To die, and pay the utmost price
And save its ideals thro' the sacrifice.

Thus at dawn do the watchers dream,
Of life and death, of love supreme :

Flushed with the dawn, hope in each breast
Their faces turn to the starless west :
Thus at dawn do the watchers think
Resolute-hearted upon death's brink
With a strange, proud look on every face—
The SCORN of Death, the PRIDE of race.

Sunset: Hurdcott Camp.

Hushed is the wind upon the southern hill:
It died e'en as the sunset in the west
Swoon'd Cleopatra-like; upon its breast
My heart is throbbing, dying with it still.

How charioteer'd by Beauty it went down,
Lost in its regal flaming majesty!
Leaving unto the evening sweet renown,
And unto my lone heart its memory.

O sunset sunken! with thee life seems gone,
And Beauty seems to hallow earth no more;
I seem within the twilight all alone—
A lover left thy beauty to adore.

Hushed is the wind: Night steals down shadowy;
A robin sings within the woods grown chill:
Yet 'mid the shadows I thy vision see;
My heart for thy wild beauty sobbeth still.

Matthew Copse.

Once in thy secret close, now almost bare,
Peace yielded up her bountiful largess ;
The dawn dropp'd sunshine thro' they leafy
dress ;
The sunset bathed thy glade with beauty rare.

Spring once wove here her tapestry of flowers,
The primrose sweet, the errant celandine ;
The blue-bell and the wild rose that doth twine
Its beauty 'round the laughing summer hours.

Here lovers stole unseen at deep'ning eve,
High-tide within their hearts, love in their eyes,
And told a tale whose magic never dies
That only they who love can quite believe.

Now 'mid thy splinter'd trees the great shells
crash,
The subterranean mines thy deeps divide ;
And men from Death and Terror there do hide—
Hide in thy caves from shrapnel's deadly splash.

Yet 'mid thy ruins, shrine now desolate,
The Spring breaks thro' and visions many a spot
With promise of the wild-rose—tho' belate—
And the eternal blue forget-me-not.

So Nature flourishes amid decay,
Defiant of the fate that laid her low ;
So Man in triumph scorning Death below
Visions the springtide of a purer day :

Dreams of the day when rampant there will rise
The flowers of Truth and Freedom from the blood
Of noble Youth who died : when there will bud
The flower of Love from human sacrifice.

There by the fallen youth, where heroes lie,
Close by each simple cross the flowers will spring,
The *bonnes enfants* will wander in the Spring,
And lovers dream those dreams that never die.

June, 1916.

An English Soldier.

He died for love of race : because the blood
Of Northern freeman swell'd his veins : arose
True to tradition that like mountain stood
Impregnable, crown'd with its pathless snows.

When broke the call, from the sepulchred years
Strong voices urged and stirr'd his soul to life ;
The call of English freeman fled his fears
And led him (their true son) into the strife.

There in the van he fought thro' many a dawn,
Stood by the forlorn hope, knew victory ;
Proud, scorning Death, fought with a purpose
drawn,
Sword-edged, defiant, grand, for Liberty.
He fell : but yielded not his English soul :
That lives out there beneath the battle's roll.

A Soldier's Funeral.

No splendid show of solemn funeral rite,
No stricken mourners following his bier,
No peal of organ reaching thro' his night,
Is rendered him whom now we bury here.

'Tis but a soldier stricken in the fight,
A youth who flung his passion into life,
Flung scorn at Death, fought true for Freedom's
    might,
Till Death did close his vision in the strife.

No splendid rite is here—yet lay him low,
Ye comrades of his youth he fought beside,
Close where the winds do sigh and wild flowers
    grow,
Where the sweet brook doth babble by his side.
No splendour, yet we lay him tenderly
To rest, his requiem the artillery.

The Night-Watch.

A lonely moorland stretching far
Beneath the stars' eternal light ;
A sentry standing there alone
Vigilant, peering thro' the night.

A meteor shoots adown the sky ;
A wild-bird wings across the moor ;
Alert, the sentry doth prepare—
Too late ! a shot ; and all is o'er.

So standeth Faith within the night
With face alight and vigil-drawn,
Thro' all the peril-haunted hour
Watching for Thought beyond the dawn.

So standeth Hope upon her peaks
Amid the avalanche of Life,
Amid the meteor-showers of Death
Watching for Love beyond the strife.

Gallipoli.

Upon the margin of a rugged shore
There is a spot now barren, desolate,
A place of graves, sodden with human gore
That Time will hallow, Memory consecrate.

There lie the ashes of the mighty dead,
The youth who lit with flame Obscurity,
Fought true for Freedom, won thro' rain of lead
Undying fame, their immortality.

The stranger wand'ring when the war is over,
The ploughman there driving his coulter deep,
The husbandman who golden harvests reap—
From hill and ravine, from each plain and
cover
Will hear a shout, see phantoms on the marge,
See men again making a deathless charge.

The Dead: A Requiem.

Let music vast, triumphal, fill the world's great
nave,
Voicing the peerless theme of noble youth
Who rose to Life's sublimest greatness at the
grave
And won from Death the diadem of Truth!
No requiem solemn, funeral chant so drear
Ought mark their passing to the vast beyond
As at the shrine of Memory we revere,
Crooning their names in murmurings so fond!
For these like some great planet spheric-
whirl'd
Have swung into the orbit of a greater world.

These topped the hill of Youth; stood on the
verge
Of vision; saw within the furthest star
Spiritual presences, Love's own avatar;
These the twin worlds of soul and flesh did
merge
Into a dream, a consciousness that stole
Around their spirits like an aureole.

Knew moments mad with ecstasy, when years
And dreams a happy bridal knew
In Life attained ; when mystery that grew
Around the fringe of Life generating years
Was swept into the magic of a morn
From darkness filched, from Love Eternal born.

These flushed with hope ; with star-uplifted eyes ;
Strainèd and tense with consciousness of life ;
Strung to high purpose ; plumed for Youth's astral skies ;
These closed with Death in vast Olympian strife !
Laughed at the fate that lured them from their paradise
To fling their rapturous souls in deathless sacrifice !

Thus should we pay our tributary tears
When Youth doth triumph over Death ; when he,
Mad with the promise of the future years,
Yieldeth his will and dies for Liberty ?

When he, like some great eagle, lightning-
wing'd,
Doth sweep above the dawn, the plains of light,
Winging swift passage (tho' by terror ring'd)
And heedless plunge into the heart of night ?
Why weep when Youth doth burst the prison
of the clod
And rise unto the heritage, the greatness of a God ?

Say not that these are dead : O rather say
That these do live (does nobleness e'er die ?)
Who might have fled with Life's autumnal day
And ne'er have left their soul unto posterity.
These nobly died : in that they live : their sin
and vice
Thro' Honour purified became high sacrifice.
Perchance the years their purpose would have
worn ;
Bred hate, despair, and disillusionment ;
Maybe their faith had melted into scorn
Till Life with tragic destinies was pent :
But in one hour of highest sacrifice
Poured out upon the altar-steps of Liberty
They consecrated Life—its destinies and vice—
And wrought within that hour their immor-
tality.

Swell out the song of life since these are meet
In fields of fadeless Memory to play
Where Life and Love in happy bridals meet ;
Where Spirits wed on earth
Their ecstasies of birth,
Embrace within the rapture of eternal day !
There, Father, thou canst greet thy son,
Aspiring to the greatness he hath won ;
There, Mother, prostrate with your tears,
Within that spirit-heaven remote, afar,
Beyond the night of future years
Behold his soul a bright and fadeless Star !

Sob out no dirge for peerless nobleness,
For Youth triumphant, greater than his fate !
It is an hour when proud of soul, elate,
Man's greatness swells our little consciousness :
When on the wings of aspiration we do rise
And reach to God beyond the brazen skies.

There is a place beyond the bourne of Time,
A niche within the archives of Eternity,
Where souls that touched on earth a chord sublime
Dwell in concordant spirit-harmony :

There these repose who gave their love, their
youth,
To feed the dying, sacred flame of Truth.

Theirs is the mighty music of the fadeless stars ;
The chant of Life, exultant with high esctasy ;
The strength of suffering gods who toil with
many scars
To wrest promethean fire for dead humanity.
Beyond our ken, beyond the limit of the years
They sweep into the soul the freedom of the
spheres.

Their life will burn with unextinguished flame
To other Youth who tread Life's upland way ;
The lustre of their chivalry will shame
All drift of life into a comic play :
And growing Youth will look with wistful eyes
On unexampled manhood meeting death
With unexampled scorn and sacrifice,

Till to their mighty yearning there cometh
An inspiration to achieve and emulate
The youth who died Life's grandeur to per-
petuate.

O Youth too great with Littleness to dwell !
O soul of Youth triumphant over death !
O envious manhood keeping sentinel
O'er nobleness of life ! O oracle which saith :
" The soul of life is in the will to give
The best to life in willing sacrifice :
Youth only reaches greatness when he dies
In fullest prime that love and truth may live.
Light's born in darkness, Life breaks from the
tomb ;
To never die and live, O dark and tragic doom ! "

JUNE, 1915.

Sergt. J. W. Streets, 13th Batt. York. & Lanc. Regt.

A Soldiers' Cemetery.

Behind that long and lonely trenchèd line
To which men come and go, where brave men
    die,
There is a yet unmarked and unknown shrine,
A broken plot, a soldiers' cemet'ry.

There lie the flower of Youth, the men who
    scorned
To live (so died) when languished liberty :
Across their graves, flowerless and unadorned,
Still scream the shells of each artillery.

When war shall cease this lonely, unknown spot
Of many a pilgrimage will be the end,
And flowers will bloom in this now barren plot
And fame upon it through the years descend—
But many a heart upon each simple cross
Will hang the grief, the memory of its loss.

The Wayside Cross.

Beneath a hawthorn bush, dying, he lay
Upon an orchard slope, a gentle hill ;
The silvery moonlight thro' the night did play
Upon his blood-stained form silent and still.

The gentle breezes of the night did fan
The perfumes of the spring-time all around ;

Through the night a nightingale did scan
His amorous song in tireless, ceaseless round.

Prostrate he lay upon a mossy bed—
The stars of night watching above his head.

That morning thro' the village there had tramped
His regiment with a joyous, mocking lilt,
Marching unto the line, their faces stamp'd
With purpose, bodies wiry, sinewy built.
Thro' the ruined, shatter'd village he
With comrades brave that morn had passed and gone.

Nor thought to these return for sanctuary
Tired and wounded when the day was done.
Within the maze of the entrenchments he
Scarce had set foot ere a shell did place
Him on the list of casualties, then he
Returned unto the first-aid ambulance base.
Since he could walk ('twas but a wounded arm)
He tramped back with a comrade, going well
Until at sundown near the village farm
He met his fate (his comrade too)—a shell.
His pal was dead, no succour was there nigh.
The sunset died, the moon rose in the sky ;
He crawled unto the bank beneath the thorn
And lay beneath the night, dying—forlorn.

From out the bourne whose outer marge is Death
His spirit waver'd, plumed its broken wings,
Tried to renew beneath each gasping breath
Its vigour at Life's quickly dying springs.
His throat was parched, his body throbbed with pain,
He fought the wave of sleep that numbed his brain ;
He cried for water, help—none were to bless,
To soothe his pain, delirious consciousness.

Sudden his body seemed to lose the throb
Of pain, his spirit fought the shadows vast
That seemed to cloud his memory and rob
Him of the life, the glory of the past.
The moon still shone ; the wind so tenderly
Whispered the tale of night's serenity.
A light rushed to his sense, a shadow leapt
Athwart his brain, his vision cleared, across
The pool where wandering moonbeams fell and
slept
He saw the silhouette of a wayside cross.

Was it a devil, nightmare, that stood there ?
Was he on earth or in some haunt of hell ?
Ah No ! perfumes of flowers were on the air—
Surely he lay in some sweet English dell
Where love-birds sang, where bluebells rang
their rune,
Where roses flamed upon the banks of June !
Or in some meadow with sweet violets nigh,
With wild larks trilling love-songs in the sky !
His vision cleared . . . that figure was the
Christ,
The Man who died for men, the God who came
And kept on Calvary a woeful tryst
To save humanity from guilt and shame.

He swept across the gulf : he was a child
Kneeling at mother's knee, chanting a prayer
Unto a God, a Saviour meek and mild,
Then in that hour he lived again the past,
Its childhood, youth, its visions and its loss,
Its love, its grief, its hope, illusions vast,
The meaning of the suffering of the Cross.
He scampered down the dell, gathered the flowers,
A child enchanted with the sunny hours ;
Sought out the wild-bird in the leafy thorn,
Sought out the wonder in the world just born.
He trod its paths flushed with his youthful dreams,
Mad with the urge of love, of high desire,
Cherished his visions by the woodland streams
And flung abroad his chansons wing'd with fire.

He felt the touch of hair upon his face ;
He heard a voice whose sofest tones were bliss ;
He felt the joy, the mastery of his race
When he had won that burning, deathless kiss.
Then pain, then loss, the falsity of friend,
The crush of life, its herculean strife,
Monotony outwearing, without end,
That which we love, we hate, mysterious—Life !

And then he read the Cross, saw in that dark
Black silhouette against the waning moon
The symbol of man's greatness; the quick spark
That lights man onward thro' the raven gloom.
He felt the pain, the agony of the Christ
Within the shadows of Gethsemane;
He felt the pain, the glory of that tryst
Kept long ago out there at Calvary.

And with that vision grand at morn he passed—
That he with others yielded up his life
For love of race, Truth's victory at last,
To win a wider vision from the strife;
The "greater love" that more no man can give,
The sacrifice outpoured that men may live;
The crown of thorns worn proudly just like He
Who went before—showed men their Calvary.
The thought thrilled thro' his brain and warmed his heart:
He gave one shudder, momently did start,
And then met proudly Death in that lone tryst,
Murmuring as he died: "Mother! England! Christ!"

The moon did wane, dawn stole above the hill,
The lark in heaven poured forth his ecstasy ;
The orchard bloom'd, the winds were hushed
and still
And there amid the moon's serenity
Firm-lipp'd and proud with victory on his face
A soldier lay, " he died for love of race."

Remembrance.

Sweet are the wind's soft kisses on the brow ;
Sweet is the singing of the mated bird ;
Sweet is the scent of blossom on the bough ;
Sweet is a woman's singing voice when heard !

Happy recall of things remembered—
Life's happy hours, love's blooded ecstasy.
Youth's sanguine dreams whose tireless wings
    outsped
The light—now silhouettes of Memory !

E'en like a dawn whose flush outlives the day ;
E'en like a star that lives beyond the night ;
As maid's remembrance of her bridal-day ;
Or as his cult to mystic acolyte—
So is the memory of these things to me
Here on the verge of death, eternity.

Comrades.

Those whom I've known, admired, ardently friended
Lie silent there wrapp'd in a soldier's shroud ;
Death broke their dreams, their aspirations ended,
These sanguine youth, noble, brave and proud.

Slowly they bear them 'neath the dim star light
Unto their rest—the soldiers' cemetery :
The chaplain chants a low, brief litany ;
The nightingale flings rapture on the night.

Back to their Mother Earth this night return
Unnumbered youth along the far-flung line ;
But 'tis for these my eyes with feeling burn,
That Memory doth erect a fadeless shrine—
For these I've known, admired, ardently friended
Stood by when Death their love, their youth swift ended.

April Evening: France, 1916.

O sweet blue eve that seems so loath to die,
Trailing the sunset glory into night,
Within the soft, cool strangeness of thy light,
My heart doth seem to find its sanctuary.

The day doth verge with all its secret care,
The thrush is lilting vespers on the thorn ;
In Nature's inner heart seems to be born
A sweet serenity ; and over there

Within the shadows of the stealing Night,
Beneath the benison of all her stars
Men, stirr'd to passion by relentless Mars,
Laughing at Death, wage an unceasing fight.

The thunder of the guns, the scream of shells
Now seem to rend the placid evening air :
Yet as the night is lit by many a flare
The thrush his love in one wild lyric tells.

O sweet blue eve ! Lingering awhile with thee,
Before the earth with thy sweet dews are wet,
My heart all but thy beauty shall forget
And find itself in thy serenity.

Shelley in the Trenches.

Impressions are like winds ; you feel their cool
Swift kiss upon the brow, yet know not where
They sprang to birth : so like a pool
Rippled by winds from out their forest lair
My soul was stir'd to life ; its twilight fled ;
There passed across its solitude a dream
That wing'd with supreme ecstasy did seem ;
That gave the kiss of life to long-lost dead.

A lark trill'd in the blue : and suddenly
Upon the wings of his immortal ode
My soul rushed singing to the ether sky
And found in visions, dreams, its real abode—
I fled with Shelley, with the lark afar,
Unto the realms where the eternal are.

May 2nd, 1916.

Love of Life.

Reach out thy hands, thy spirit's hands to me
And pluck the Youth, the magic from my heart—
Magic of dreams whose sensibility
Is plumèd like the light ; visions that start
Mad pressure in the blood : desire that thrills
The soul with mad delight ; to yearning wed
All slothfulness of life : draw from its bed
The soul of dawn across the twilight hills.

Reach out thy hands, O spirit, till I feel
That I am fully thine : for I shall live
In the proud consciousness that thou dost
give :
And if thy twilight fingers round me steal
And draw me unto death—thy votary
Am I, O Life, reach out thy hands to me !

Serenity.

Peace can be found in strife : artillery
Are belching forth this sweet, entrancing morn
Their projectiles of death : yet as in scorn,
Lost in the sky's clear, blue serenity
The larks in music sing their love new-born,
Trilling its joy, its natural ecstasy ;
The butterfly along Life's drift is borne ;
And seeking nectar drones the wand'ring bee.

Thus Nature is serene amid the strife :
And in the hearts of those who calmly stand
Here in the trenches ('mid Death's hail) un-
mann'd,
Flinging at Death the treasure of a Life—
There is a peace unknown to those (deny !)
Who have not dared for Liberty to die.

The Miracle of the Cross.

Showers of shrapnel, scream of deadly shells ;
And broken lie the belfry's prayerful bells
Amid the silent, ruined cloisters, where
Lonely, mute on His Cross, Christ hangeth there.

There Life is at ebb-tide ; even the air
Brings presage of swift death ; Earth's bosom
bare
Uplifted is in prayer unto the skies
While up to brazen Heaven are lifted eyes

Of stricken Mothers blinded with their pain ;
Weeping for those they ne'er will see again ;
Their hearts are numb beneath calamity—
No hope is left them, only memory.

The fire-swept leaves drift to an early tomb,
While Youth immortal find a noble doom—
Drift down to death in leaden hurricanes,
While scarr'd, near by, the crucifix remains

A symbol which men in their madness heed ;
Symbol of Love to which their hope doth speed
Upon the wings of prayer ; as there they die
The crucifix their end doth glorify.

For there when Life and Death end their dark feud
And Hatred veils its ugliness so nude ;
When man looks o'er the chaos vast and deep ;
When o'er her broken idols Love doth weep :

When peace blows from the south, another spring,
And men again of brotherhood do sing ;
When Mem'ry seeks her agony to drown—
Batter'd and scarr'd, Christ pitying will look down :

Look down from His lone Calvary of pain—
Has He died for humanity in vain ?—
Still brooding o'er the world for which He died,
Giving for men the life that they denied.

His lot Mount Olivet, Gethsemane,
The daily crown of scorn, dark Calvary,
As looking down on men He sees them give
Their souls to Hate when thro' Love they may
live.

Yet patient He looks down and tenderly ;
His hope is wring'd with immortality ;
He sees a time when on men He'll look down
From Calvary wearing a kingly crown.

July, 1915.

My Hope.

You came into the shadow of my grief
(A lovely vision radiating light) ;
Your passing was as soulful and as brief
As winds among the forest pines at night.

Yet tho' you've passed my dwelling-place so rude
(Have verged into the distances afar)
Sometimes I see above my solitude
Your mem'ry like a radiant evening star.

Sometimes I feel, O vision, you will come
(As some new dawn that o'er dark hills doth break)
Unto my heart, a rude tho' ready home,
And will its silence into music shake.

October, 1915.

To . . . .

Two shining eyes that never lose their light,
Haunting with dreams like stars within the night ;
Two rosy lips whose magic kisses fall
Wild on my own in passion magical.

Two shining eyes that ever gaze on me,
Haunting as some old Irish melody ;
Two rosy lips that ever seem to press,
Right thro' my dreams, on mine their own caress.

Tho' Hope be dim, tho' fade Youth's rosy flush ;
Tho' Death may come, tho' Life my spirit crush ;
Two haunting eyes will never cease to shine ;
Two magic lips will ever press on mine.

November, 1915.

A Nocturne.

Night broodeth o'er the solitude serene
As some glad mother o'er her first-born child,
Pouring her gladness on the shadowy scene
In floods of magic moonlight : bird-cries wild

Ring out amid the stillness ; soon the stars
(Night's waking dreams) jewel the welkin wide ;
The dark trees stand mysterious avatars ;
The moon moves proudly like a regal bride.

There camped upon the crest-line of the hill
Slumber the men beneath the silent night :
The Youth who wait the broken line to fill,
Strong to endure and eager for the fight.

And there beyond hushed in a deeper sleep
Upon the fire-swept zones, beneath the free
Blue silent night, there lay men who did keep
Our pride of Honour for posterity.

Now in this hour ships from yon harbour go,
Yon southern port, bearing their human freight ;
Brown men of steel born to resist the foe,
Dreaming of life and love so near death's gate—

Into the night they merge, and who can tell
If to pass Youth or at its ecstasy
To die : the night doth keep lone sentinel
Above Life's grand eternal mystery.

1915.

Impression.

A breath of wind ; a fragrant memory ;
Soft music and the magic of a song ;
A night beneath whose moonlight pale and
strong
Two souls thro' love beheld eternity.

A mem'ry of Love's hours with gladness pent ;
Of Youth and Joy dancing high carnival ;
A fading of Love's vision magical ;
A parting which Youth's hope with dumb grief
rent :

This hallow'd mem'ry dying on a deep
And bitter sigh : a movement on the marge ;
The *elan* of men rushing to the charge ;
A stab of pain ; a thought ; a smile ; then
sleep.

1915.

The Song of the Crusaders.

Freemen of England! born upon an isle
Steel-girt, inviolate, bred beneath a sky
That looketh down with a benignant smile
Upon the ancient shrine of Liberty:

We go full-breasted, well in one desire—
Flinging our vested lives into the van,
Meeting the iron rack, the hail of fire,
To bring humanity again to Man.

We go, in courage equal and in breed,
Break thro' the barrier of Teutonic hate
To save a Nation from the power of Greed,
And rescue man from slavish, sinister fate.

We leave behind our heritage, desires,
Intoxicating loves, our dreams of Youth,
Life's guerdon of sweet Ease—to quench the fires
That would reduce to ashes noble Truth.

We march to death singing our deathless songs,
Like Knights invested with a purpose high,
Towards a flaming barrier of wrongs—
To show how freemen live, how freemen die.

And should we pass out there on Flanders plains
Our spirits will return to that green spot
Amid the seas where Liberty remains
A shrine amid Life's ruins not forgot :

And Youth within the span of future years
Will hear our phantom armies marching by :
The tramp of freemen—adamant to fears—
Showing them how for Liberty to die !

1915.

A Lark Above the Trenches.

Hushed is the shriek of hurtling shells : and
hark !
Somewhere within that bit of soft blue sky—
Grand in his loneliness, his ecstasy,
His lyric wild and free—carols a lark.

I in the trench, he lost in heaven afar,
I dream of Love, its ecstasy he sings ;
Doth lure my soul to love till like a star
It flashes into Life : O tireless wings

That beat love's message into melody—
A song that touches in this place remote
Gladness supreme in its undying note
And stirs to life the soul of memory—
'Tis strange that while you're beating into life
Men here below are plunged in sanguine strife !

France, 1916.

The Hedge.

Like memories born in a dream my Fancy
around thee plays,
Re-embodies the life, the beauty of olden days
That were thine ere the scourge of war—
aflame in the sweet blue sky—
Wither'd thy full expanding life—leaving thy
spring to die.

Those were the days when the violets bloom'd
blue at thy brambly feet,
Beauty's own flower, shedding upon the winds
perfumes sweet ;
When the bee went hunting down the trail of
the celandine,
And the primrose starr'd the May with loveli-
ness divine.
When the sunbeams played in thy leaves and
the wild brook fled to a tune ;
When the wild rose trailed its beauty thro' the
noons of June ;

When the silver-throated thrush sang on the dewy thorn,
And the lark sprang mad with love beyond the top of morn.

The wild birds hid their nests within thy secret bowers,
And sweet-faced children joyously gather'd thy pageant of flowers ;
In the soft deep twilights of summer when the stars stole out in the night,
The moths on silken wings stole down thy ways in flight.

Now like a woman who keeps but the ghost of a wasted life,
Alluring, breeding pity, thy vestige fronts the strife :
With bullets and bursting shells, thy trees all splinter'd and torn
Thou remainest a ghost of thyself—a glory alas ! now forlorn.

Behind thy broken line, brown faces their vigil keep,
Peering into the night, and into Death's shadows deep ;

Fronting the great unknown as thou frontest
the twilight now,
Bold, enduring, grand, with flowers on thy
scorch'd brow.

For thy sap still stirs in thy veins and defiant of
death will rise
And weave thro' the years' wild beauty 'neath
soft summer skies—
And the men who peer thro' thy leaves facing
the battle's hot breath
Like thee will project their life beyond the
phase of Death.

May, 1916.

To a Dead Poet.

I, too, have loved with you our mother Earth :
Listen'd at pensive eve the lyric thrush
Shake out his ecstasy to lovely birth
Rapturously in some lone shadowy bush.
I, too, have gazed on youth : watched in his eyes
The lightning passion flash, the vision glow,
Have watched him like a god ascendant rise—
I, too, have seen the fires of Youth burn low.
Sad with the presage of his chilling breath
Fearless you took the shadowy way with death.
You took the harp of life with broken strings
Sang in your passing brave of noble things.
That brave serenity I pray to know
When out with Death into the night I go.

May, 1915.

Now and After.

NOW.

" Mother of England ! why do you weep ? "
" My heart's with the fate of my own dearest
sons
Fighting for Freedom against modern Huns :
Prayerful, a watch o'er their spirits I keep :
I gave them up gladly, but Oh, how I pine,
To kiss and embrace them, laddies of mine ! "

" Daughter of England ! why do you grieve ? "
" I think of my lover so tender and brave,
And there in my dreams I oft see a grave,
Until with its sadness my bosom doth heave.
I think of his manhood, I dream of his loss :
How hard 'tis to tread the way of the cross ! "

" Young boy of England ! why do you cry ? "
" I once had a daddy so tall and so strong,
Who loved me and sang of his love in deep song ;
Who often for me toys and sweeties would buy :
But why does my daddy not come back to me?
For though he's a soldier he must long for me ! "

AFTER.

" Mother of England ! do you regret
Giving your sons to die for their land ? "
" No ! while I freedom of life understand ;
No ! though my eyes with their memories are wet.
I'd give them again, my laddies so brave,
Tho' my Life's in their memory, and my heart's in their grave ! "

" Daughter of England ! do you recall
The night that you bade your fair lover go ? "
" My lover a man was and had I said ' No '
His sweetheart a woman you never could call.
I'm glad, as his features in memory I scan,
My love was a soldier, my love was a man ! "

" Young lad of England ! are you not glad
Your father did fight the terrible foe ? "
" I'm proud with the mem'ry and sometimes I grow
In thought of his deeds with emotion half mad.
I wear, Sir, the V.C. (though dead) that he won :
'Twill keep me in honour, 'twill make me his son ! "

To W.H.W.

You called to me from o'er the restless tide :
Within the deepening shades of Death's confines,
—Like winds grown free among the forest pines
Did set my Spirit free : and like a bride—
Like a lost mistress to a lover sad—
Led my young spirit unto Love : relit
The flame, the dream where two friends long ago would sit
Together happy, disunited mad.

So near to death, friend, have I grown to thee—
Grown to thy Soul like ivy to the wall,
Beheld a dream of Love's eternity—
Near to the grave, beneath a soldier's pall.
If time ne'er grants our friendship future span,
Know, friend, we met in spirit Man to Man !

May, 1916. FRANCE.

" O Liberty, at thy command, we challenge death."

———

(A Personal Note from a Chum, now a Schoolmaster and Mission Worker.)

This line, taken from one of the poems of J.W. S., tells in essence the reason that led one who hated war to go from that quiet North Derbyshire village to make one of the millions who are fighting for us and our Allies. Of his life as a soldier, others can speak with far greater insight and knowledge than the writer of these lines.

Born in the same village, attending the same Sunday school, playing in the same cricket team, finally coming to intimacy, the ideals and pursuits of J.W.S. flowed into our common chat. Condemned, as he was, to toil from boyhood in the mine, and also to environment that wounded his sensitive nature, his was yet ever the search after the beautiful and the true.

His aspirations, emotions, and ideals found expression in a multiple field. As a worker in the small Wesleyan community of his village, he did noble service in the Sunday School, and yet, perhaps, his greatest joy was to form one of that enthusiastic small choir that helped in

the ministry of praise. Early, too, he tried to express himself with the brush, and gave great promise, though always the call of a written mode of expressing himself was with him.

When the final bent was yet in doubt, though assuredly tending to the call of poetic form, war came. This sheared away any doubt that remained, destroyed a certain anæmic tinge in his make-up, crystallised his thoughts, and gave, in lines like those in the sonnet "Gallipoli," the fine spirit and real feeling that had been germinating within him and striving after expression for years.

His poems tell, however, the secret of his whole life, which was an untiring love of nature. Together, we have tracked the hedgehog to his hiding-place; together, we have lain on summer evenings in the glorious woodlands of our native place, attempting to drink in—nay, become part of—its very life; together, we have learned the calls of all its feathered habitants; together, we have searched out all its rarest flowers; together, we have drunk its beauties through all the seasons. Shall we again?

J.M.

THE WAR IN POETRY.

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